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AUTHOR	Emmett, Richard S., Jr.; McNeill, David
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ABSTRACT

The two papers represent the result of a four-week 7th and 8th grade unit entitled the Caesar Unit. Organized using primary sources, the basic materials were a selection of Cicero's letters and Caesar's Commentary on the Civil War. The first paper, by the classroom teacher of the unit, contains brief factual information about the materials, children, and classroom conditions, and records the author's impressions. Six children selected from public and parochial schools in the Cambridge, Massachusetts area participated in the daily one-hour classes. The classes concentrated on sources of and reasons for conflicts in the accounts of Caesar and Cicero. The author's evaluation of the course centers around difficulties in translations, the need for background information, and relevant materials. The second paper records events from the point of view of a linguist and offers suggestions about the relation of linguistic skills to the ability to read, study, and write history. The necessary skill of critical reading is discussed in terms of the students' ability to infer information from written material. The author reports results of a test given students in which they were asked to point out the ambiguities in selected quotations. The difference between students interacting with each other as opposed to interacting with the material is also discussed. (Author/RC)

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Occasional Papers No. 1 and No. 2

Report on the "Caesar Unit"-1964

by Richard S. Emmett, Jr.

Some Linguistic Skills for History Students

by David McNeill

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The Social Studies Curriculum Program

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Introduction

The two papers that follow are both based on the same experience during the summer of 1964: a four-week study, by seventh and eighth grade children at the Morse School in Cambridge, of certain materials relating to events in late 50 and early 49 B.C. The first paper is by Richard Emmett, the classroom teacher for this unit. This paper records his impressions; it also contains the basic factual information concerning the materials, the children, and the classroom conditions. The second paper, by Dr. David McNeill of the Center for Cognitive Studies at Harvard University, records the events from the point of view of a linguist and makes some suggestions, based on daily observations, about the relation of linguistic skills to the ability to study, read, and "write" history.

Both of these papers were originally written for intramural use and circulation only. However, they were judged to be of interest to a wider audience, and accordingly they are here reproduced for larger, though still very limited, circulation. We hope that persons engaged in curriculum development in other subject areas – whether at ESI or elsewhere – will find them useful. We also hope that teachers, principals, superintendents, psychologists, and historians, to name but a few, will want to read them.

In the interest of speed and economy, no elaborate editing was attempted, nor are any pretensions to scholarship made. If these papers will succeed in stimulating discussion and controversy about teaching and learning they will have served their function.

PETER WOLFF
Editorial Director

Report on the "Caesar Unit"-1964

by Richard S. Emmett, Jr.

In the summer of 1964 we completed a four-week teaching session on the "Caesar Unit," using the materials previously assembled for ESI. The session involved six children from the Cambridge area who were attending the ESI summer school at the Morse School in Cambridge. These children volunteered to attend an additional one-hour class in the afternoon, after completing their regular morning program.

The six children were drawn from several different public and parochial schools in the area. They were: Dennis Avery (grade 8); Paul Antonopoulis (8); Debbie Winn (8); Juan Evereteze (8); David Callanan (7); and Paul Leonard (7).

There were five one-hour classes per week, lasting from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. On several occasions, however, a number of the children stayed on well beyond the regular finishing hour, to continue the discussion or to raise new issues. Classes were held in one of the regular Morse classrooms. Ordinarily we sat around a hollow square of desks, although different arrangements were used for sessions at which slides were shown or in which the class was divided into two working groups. This flexible and informal kind of seating arrangement seemed to work well although it is certainly not vital.

I served as teacher at all sessions and did the necessary planning. Regular observers included Sally Scully of ESI, who kept a very full record of each class session, and David McNeill of the Harvard Center for Cognitive Studies. There were a number of irregular observers, including Peter Wolff of ESI, and Jerome Bruner, Director of the Harvard Center for Cognitive Studies. The children seemed to accept the presence of adult observers with equanimity.

Frequently, useful discussions were held before and after the class sessions, reviewing the material covered, the methods used, the response of the students, and the future of the Caesar Unit. Sally Scully was able to do some preliminary research on the existing sources and on possible additional sources and materials.

David McNeill prepared three tests which sought to analyze the ability of the children to use this kind of material effectively and in the final week met with several of the children individually to go over the results of these tests.

While the conditions at Morse this summer were ideal in many respects for conducting this kind of a session, it should be noted that on many afternoons the heat and humidity were high and that the children came to the class after a relatively full and intense morning. It should also be noted that we did not feel that we should assign homework for this class, in view of the season and the children's other commitments. However, two of the students did do some outside reading on their own initiative.

It is difficult to make any definite statements concerning the relative ability of these children since we had no records indicating their performance on standard aptitude and reading tests. On the other hand, from the very nature of the class, one can infer that these were children with a high degree of academic motivation derived from some source. One can also say, in general, that each child showed a considerable degree of ability in at least some areas and yet found a considerable challenge in the materials and in the demands of the class sessions. Finally, none of the children had more than a very fragmentary background in Roman history.

Apart from these common attributes, there was a considerable variation in classroom performance, both from day to day and from one child to another. Dennis, for example, was quite weak in his analysis and use of specific written material but indicated a high degree of curiosity and initiative, a retentive memory, a fairly wide range of interests, considerable shrewdness and great tenacity. David got more than Dennis from what he read, also had a good memory and retained an objective approach; however, he tired early and gave up easily, preferring to compromise or relapse into silence rather than to continue grappling with an issue. Juan was strong on intuition but rarely used the materials constructively. He shot fast and furiously from the lip, generating much noise, scoring a few bull's-eyes and registering a vast number of complete misses. He also was the only class member to go through a period of open disaffection for the course, although he later sought strenuously to "restore" his image. Paul Leonard was a slow reader, inarticulate and passive, but he would occasionally, through careful reading, pick out key points that the others had hurried by. The best students in

the customary sense were Paul Antonopoulis and Debbie, the former having an edge on intuition.

The basic materials used were a selection of Cicero's letters[1] and Caesar's *Commentary on the Civil War* (particularly chapters 1-11). In addition, short selections from Plutarch, Suetonius, and Lucan dealing with the crossing of the Rubicon were used, as was Polybius' description and analysis of the Roman Constitution.[2] About eighty slides were shown,[3] over five sessions, in conjunction with the written materials and with various maps (particularly a relief map of Italy produced by the U.S. Army).

Most of the class time, especially in the first two weeks, was devoted to the oral reading and a close analysis of the two basic sources. Through persistent teacher questioning, either direct or in response to student questions and comments, the basic information and issues were slowly (often very slowly) developed. The picture was rarely complete or wholly accurate, but many errors and uncertainties were clarified later by additional materials or by a further round of questions. The children, in general, seemed to find this approach demanding, sometimes frustrating, but stimulating.

The nature of the crisis in Rome was the first general subject pursued, and about two weeks were devoted to this topic. After opening with Cicero 303, we initially concentrated on the earlier letters to and from Cicero (266-298) and then switched to Caesar's version of the events of the first week of January (Chapters 1-6). The Caesar version was then compared to Cicero 300 – the first exploration of two sources describing the same events.

The first week was devoted largely to the discovery and analysis of additional conflicts, both within the Caesar commentary (Where did the tribunes join Caesar?) and between Caesar and other sources. The first such inter-source conflict concerned the crossing of the Rubicon. Far more attention, however, was devoted to the conflict between the Caesar and Cicero versions of the events immediately following the occupation of Rimini. The discovery of this conflict involved some slow, painstaking

[1] Letters 266-318 from *The Letters of Cicero*, tr. Evelyn S. Shuckburgh, London. 1899-1905.

[2] Plutarch, *Life of Caesar;* Suetonius, "Julius Caesar" in *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars;* Lucan, *Pharsalia;* Polybius, *The Histories*, Bk. VI.

[3] These slides were taken by Jim Burke of *Life* Magazine for ESI. The photographer followed Caesar's route from Ravenna to Brindisi, taking approximately 5000 photographs.

work and required the effective use of a larger amount of material than had been true hitherto. After a slow, difficult day I decided to split the class into two working groups, each using one basic source. Once the two groups had worked out their respective chronologies, the issue was joined and the debate raged long and loud. Some of the early arguments were misdirected, aimed at the other team rather than at the other source. Only slowly and tentatively were the children willing to accept the fact that the sources were in direct conflict, and there were many suggestions of compromising the issue. Moreover, even when asked to explain the conflict in writing, all the students adopted the most innocuous theories – none was willing to take the position that Caesar or Cicero had deliberately distorted the sequence of events. In general, there seemed to be a great backlog of unquestioning faith in the printed word.

Although the conflict of evidence issue continued to flare up during the final week, most of the last days were devoted to following Caesar's drive down the peninsula. One particularly successful session was spent in locating Corfinium (not on their maps) by means of the clues in the Caesar text, then exploring the implications of its location with the aid of the relief map (using eyes and touch) and finally introducing the slides and trying to relate them to what they had read and to what they felt and saw on the relief map.

For the final sessions the children had been asked to read portions of Polybius' description of the Roman Constitution, written about 100 years before the Civil War. This source stimulated an interesting and useful discussion in which the students compared Polybius' view and analysis to the picture they had reconstructed from the Caesar-Cicero sources in the first two weeks. They were able to perceive and articulate quite successfully the shift to a condition where military power was paramount although most of the political forms were preserved.

In general, my regard for and interest in the Caesar Unit were increased as a result of the summer session. However, there is much that can and should be done before the Unit is generally used. *First,* I became more acutely conscious of the unnecessary barriers created by this particular Cicero translation. *Second,* it would seem that some review should be undertaken to determine whether additional letters should be included and whether some letters might be eliminated. In a brief review of the Loeb edition of the letters to Atticus, I did find two letters

that seemed to give a clearer picture of the background of the crisis (Atticus VII, 1, 9). *Third*, there are some instances where the Caesar translation is open to question. Chapter 5, concerning the tribunes joining Caesar at Ravenna, and Chapter 8 ("At this juncture") are cases in point. *Fourth*, I do feel that some background information on Pompey, Cicero and Caesar and on prior events directly related to the crisis of 49 B.C. would raise the level of student comprehension of the issues without destroying the tensions, conflicts, doubts and discoveries that make the present collection of sources so rewarding and so adapted to student involvement. *Fifth*, I think that additional basic information on Roman transportation should be made more readily available, to avoid some of the rather fruitless and dubious attempts to reconstruct the chronology of events. *Sixth*, further work could well be done, to help teachers to isolate the specific problems that are present in the materials and to indicate specifically what materials are most relevant to each problem and how they may be most effectively used.

Some Linguistic Skills for History Students

by David McNeill

The Caesar Unit hopes to teach history by having students examine documents. Such success as the Caesar Unit might achieve depends on at least two things: the students' skills for inferring information from written sources and the teacher's ability to guide this process. Of course, there are other determinants of the success of the Unit, but these two have obvious importance. To a degree, I believe they are interchangeable. If this is true, the partial interchangeability of teacher's ability and students' skills can be turned to pedagogical advantage in that a less able teacher can be compensated by improving students' skills. Yet, such interchangeability poses a danger, for there is the corresponding possibility that skillful teaching will prevent students from developing their skills. In short, there is protection to be gained against both the clever teacher and the inept one by giving explicit consideration to the language skills of history students.

In what follows, I try to analyze these language skills and describe my efforts to study some of them. I am certain the list is not complete. Nor are these skills entirely linguistic; the line between language and cognition disappears somewhere in the Caesar Unit. My effort should be seen as a crude and brief first approximation to a description of what students must do – linguistically or otherwise – in order to study history from documents.

The heart of the Caesar Unit is inference-making. I want to differentiate at the outset between actual reasoning on the one hand and organization of the materials of thought on the other. I believe the difficulty 11 and 12 year-old children have in working with documents is not in being "logical." I think that is the easy part. Rather, they have trouble in getting their materials properly organized. It is in this realm that the students' linguistic skills

and the teacher's unrelenting questioning are important and, to a degree, interchangeable.

The basic skill, supporting all others, is reading critically. "Critical" is not the name for what I mean, but I have been unable to think of a better one. Critical reading is not the same as reading fluently. It is, instead, something like an ability to see the connotations of sentences. The critical reader gets beyond the material literally referred to and perceives that the sentence is relevant to a larger domain My assumption is that the parallel between critical reading and formal reasoning is very close. The literal contents of sentences are premises; the connotations are the conclusions. The problem for the student who would become a critical reader is to treat sentences as premises on which to base conclusions, a problem which is complicated by the fact that propositions in sentences are rarely arranged in syllogistic form. Moreover, there is nothing in the sentence itself which triggers this realization of connotation, so the difficulty of alerting students to connotation is formidable.

An example will clarify what is meant here by connotation and the relation of connotation to inference:

> "Several Pompeian contingents swelled Caesar's ranks and others increased his cavalry strength."

In addition to what it says about what happened to Pompey's troops, this statement pertains to their loyalty. The implication is that they were not reliable. This example is particularly obvious for the reason that the sentence really has just one proposition and so there is no problem of organization. However, note that the sentence itself does not contain information on the loyalty of Pompey's troops. If one were to carry out an analysis of the sentence in the manner of Katz and Fodor, none of the readings would be "Pompey's troops are disloyal." There are no automatic rules of English grammar which guide the reader to connotative information; he must ferret it out for himself.

Much of historical reconstruction appears to depend on using connotation in this sense. However, my evidence is that the principal difficulty for 11 and 12 year-olds in learning history from documents comes precisely at this point. Except in the simplest cases, they are unable to use written sentences as premises from which to infer additional information.

Testing

I gave students in the Caesar class a set of quotations from Cicero's letters and Caesar's *Commentaries on the Civil Wars*. Most quotations were one sentence long; some consisted of two sentences. Most were taken from documents the students had not yet seen. Questions were appended after each quotation which the children had to answer.

The students worked with pencil and paper. Later, I interviewed the students. The quotations were of two types. In some, the questions could be answered on the basis of the information contained in the quotation; i.e., the answer to the question was a connotation of the quotation. In others, the questions were unanswerable. These quotations were ambiguous in that at least two connotations of the quotation were answers to each question. An example of an unambiguous quotation is the one given above about Pompey's troops defecting to Caesar. An ambiguous quotation is the following:

> "Caesar wrote: 'All units of the 13th were recalled from their garrison stations and we moved in the direction of Osimo. The town was occupied under Publius Attius Varus.'"

The quotation provides contradictory answers. The ambiguity focuses on the verb "was" in the second sentence. This is because crucial information is lacking, namely, whether there was a battle over Osimo and if there was, did it occur before or after Varus' occupancy? If there was no battle, Varus was on Caesar's side. If a battle occurred and it came after Varus' occupancy, Varus was on Pompey's side; but, if the battle came before, Varus was on Caesar's side. In order to recognize the ambiguity of this quotation, a student would have to generate both answers; it would be desirable if also he realized what it takes to disambiguate the quotation – information about the battle.

All quotations, ambiguous or not, had the question "Can you tell?" after them. Thus, the students had to discriminate ambiguous and unambiguous cases. It seemed possible that the children would not do this, even when they could correctly infer information from unambiguous quotations. All other things being equal, there is at least twice as much to do cognitively when spotting an ambiguity as when inferring from an unambiguous passage.

The results are laid out in Tables 1, 2, and 3. The children gave much the same answers to all the questions. Whatever skills

this text engaged, then, seem to have been possessed by the children in general. Three of the quotations led to correct inferences, three to incorrect inferences (Table 1). It is clear to intuition that the three quotations which led to correct inferences are "easy" in contrast to the three which did not. The basis of this intuition, I believe, is awareness of the number of propositions which must be considered in order to reach a correct answer. By talking here about the number of propositions which require consideration, I am lumping together at least two distinct processes. One is comparing propositions, as, for example, in noting an ambiguity. Here information must be held simultaneously in mind. The other process is inferring information on the basis of information already inferred. In this case, each successive step is a summary of what has gone on before, and information can be worked on successively. In both cases, however, the child must organize materials, and the larger the number of propositions, the more difficult the problem of organization will be. More careful work will distinguish the successive and simultaneous cases, but that has not been done here.

In Table 2 is the number of correct answers to each question in relation to the number of propositions which had to be considered. These results are not particularly orderly in their details, mainly because of the question involving three propositions which every student answered correctly. The question was "Is Pompey a traitor or hero?" Since the students were generally anti-Pompeians, the correct answer "traitor" came easily and need not have been inferred from the quotation. Moreover, part of the quotation said that Pompey behaved "dishonorably," and while this was not logically sufficient to conclude that Pompey had been a traitor, every student cited that passage during the interview to explain his answer.

Aside from this question, however, the general finding is that the number of propositions which must be considered affects accuracy of inference. This is the principal evidence that a major difficulty for 11 and 12 year-olds in getting information from documents is organizing materials for inference. The remedy here would be to find ways which the students can use of ordering the propositions of a sentence in terms of importance. One possibility, which is discussed below, is that intonation can assist this process.

Table 3 shows how often the children opted not to answer the substantive questions after ambiguous quotations. The result

(left half of table) seems to be that the option was rarely taken, which means that the students did not usually detect ambiguous quotations. There is one exception in quotation 5. It said, "Such an idea never occurred to our friend Pompey in former times, and least of all in this controversy." The question was "Is the writer accusing or defending Pompey in this sentence?" Two-thirds of the students rightly said they could not tell. However, this seems not to be because they spied an ambiguity. When interviewed, only one (Debbie) was aware that interpretation of the quotation required knowing whether the idea referred to was a good one or a bad one. I think the trouble here is that quotation 5, unlike the other ambiguities, required the students to consider several propositions, even for them to be misled into answering the substantive question. They had to assign some value to the idea referred to in the quotation – either good or bad – and then invert this value because Pompey had not considered the idea. In short, when saying they could not answer, the children meant the substantive question was too difficult. If so, it is the only case where the children recognized their own limitations – but more on this below. The other ambiguities were usually seen as interpretable. In the case of quotation 7, which is the one about Publius Varus occupying Osimo, the results are clear. The children easily inferred one of the two answers but never (except, again, for Debbie) both. Of the five children who answered the substantive question, three said Varus was on Caesar's side, two thought he was on Pompey's side.

Quotation 2 was very difficult, and for a special reason. In quotations 5 and 7, the ambiguity is semantic; it arises from the possibility of doubly interpreting one word – "idea" in the case of 5, "was" in the case of 7. In quotation 2, on the other hand, the ambiguity is pragmatic. There is not a single word which is ambiguous. Rather, the interpretation changes, depending on what one imagines was the writer's state of mind. The quotation read:

> "Caesar wrote to Cicero: 'I beg of you that I may avail myself of your advice, influence, position, and support of every kind.'
>
> – Does Caesar consider Cicero to be his ally?"

The ambiguity of this quotation comes from the possibility that Caesar was uncertain of Cicero and thus wrote a conciliatory sentence or two. However, every child thought the quotation

meant that Caesar considered Cicero to be an ally. Unanimously, the word "beg" was the reason: one begs from friends.

Pragmatic connotation must be most interesting for the historian, but if quotation 2 is representative, it is a type of inference most difficult for children to make. During the interview, I was usually able to persuade the students that quotation 7 was ambiguous, but I had no success with quotation 2. The problem seemed to be that in pragmatic ambiguity there is no one word on which the double interpretation is focused. This is a problem, however, only because the children find it difficult to draw any pragmatic inferences at all. The difficulty of pragmatic inference is indexed by the children's devotion to the word "beg," consideration of which might have been helpful in the case of a semantic ambiguity but not in the case of this pragmatic one.

In any future work on these problems, the selection of quotations should be done with much greater care than I devoted to it. The left side of Table 2 is not really interpretable. Quotation 5 turns out to have been too difficult to test fairly the idea that children can detect ambiguities, and quotation 2 involved pragmatic rather than semantic connotations. The evidence that children overlook semantically ambiguous quotations comes from just quotation 7. I would suggest that in future work grammatical, semantic, and pragmatic ambiguities be studied separately, with variations built into the semantic cases in terms of the number of propositions to be considered and the types of cognitive operations to be performed (e.g., inversion, comparison, etc.).

Assuming it to be true that 11 and 12 years-olds cannot detect ambiguous quotations, one consequence would be that the children will over-interpret documents. They will accept whatever reading they happen to note. Such seems to have been the case for the students in the Caesar class. Another effect, parallel to over-interpretation, occurs for those unambiguous quotations which are too difficult for the children. We should call this misinterpretation. It arises because the students do not seem to recognize when they fail to comprehend. The right half of Table 3 shows the number of times the students opted to say they could not answer substantive questions after unambiguous quotations. The option was virtually never taken. Recalling from Table 1 that most of the questions after quotations 3 and 4 were not answered correctly, these results suggest that the children were answering questions mainly because questions were there. It was not important whether the children had answers to give.

My impression is that the question, not the quotation, is a sufficient condition for inferring information. These children seem not to be committed to the materials as such, and I wonder if they can always recognize an answer when faced with one.

Intonation

The main shortcoming these students seem to have in learning from documents is an inability to read critically. The trouble appears to be in organizing the materials for thought: quotations which required the students to put together two or more propositions usually brought disaster. This was true of both the ambiguous and unambiguous cases. In this section I want to suggest a remedy. The findings here are based more on my introspections than on observations of children. The introspection is that spoken material seems to be more easily organized than written material. What makes the difference, I think, is intonation. When I read a complex passage of prose aloud, I tend to distribute stress and pitch so as to rank order the logical propositions contained in the passage. In case I do not understand the passage, I try various combinations of pitch stress. I think this is done by all adults as a matter of course. The children of the Caesar class, in contrast, usually read prose with completely non-English patterns of intonation. However, the children apparently can be helped by intonation, which implies that their difficulty with written materials lies in seeing them as something outside normal (spoken) language. I suspect there is a reason for this. It is that throughout elementary education, children are carefully protected from prose in which connotation plays an important role. Thus, they never see the possibility of using the literal content of written sentences as premises on which to base conclusions, nor h. ve they had practice organizing materials for the purpose of drawing conclusions. I imagine the effect of such training is to create a curious "literary" form for the children in which written language is conceived to be largely separate from spoken language. In their spoken language, however, intonation is abundantly used, and I suppose it serves an organizational function. The problem then is to overcome the children's "literary" style by restoring intonation to their interpretation of written material.

Consider the following passage:

> "What terms from Caesar could there be that were preferable to Pompey's abandonment of his country?"

– Did Pompey accept Caesar's terms?
– Should Pompey have accepted Caesar's terms?
– Did Pompey leave Italy?
– Should Pompey have left Italy?

This passage is ambiguous in at least three ways, perhaps more. It is very difficult for adults, not to mention children. Each of its three readings has a different pattern of answers to the four questions. One of the readings is inferior since it does not specify exactly the answers to all the questions: in this reading, the terms were for Pompey to leave the country. The two other readings are more interesting for present purposes. Try to see the quotation as critical of *Caesar*. The pattern of answers is *no–no–yes–yes*. The gist of the quotation under this reading is that Caesar is at fault for having offered very bad terms; Pompey rightly rejected them and left Italy. If one reads the quotation aloud, trying to encode this meaning, extra-heavy stresses and extra-high pitches will fall on *What*, *Caesar*, *could*, *be*, and possibly *preferable*. Also, I think juncture is introduced after each of these words. The rest of the sentence is read without juncture under normal intonation. Intonation here selects the guilty party, and knowledge of guilt is the main organizational principle through which answers to the four questions can be inferred. In fact, one can partially answer each question from the general proposition: Caesar was wrong, Pompey was right.

Now try to see the quotation as critical of Pompey. In this case the pattern of answers is *yes–no–no–yes*. Reading the quotation aloud with this meaning in mind, the extra-heavy stress and extra-high pitch move to *Pompey's*, *abandonment*, and *country*, again marking the guilty person. The gist of this reading of the quotation is that Caesar offered inferior terms; it would have been better to leave Italy; but Pompey accepted the terms and remained at home.

Not surprisingly, the children made little sense of this quotation in written form. Moreover, it developed during the interview that *listening* to the quotation did *not* provide much help. But the indications are that when the child managed to read it expressively *himself*, answers to the questions more or less fell into place. One student, Paul A., after listening to me read the quotation (under the critical-to-Pompey interpretation), was not able to unravel the sentences. On request, he imitated my reading, and the following took place:

Paul: (reads, placing special emphasis on *could*) Oh! What terms from Caesar *could* there be that Pompey preferred more than leaving his country? So, "yes" to the first question.

Interviewer: The second question?

Paul: (pause, during which he reads in a whisper) According to whoever wrote this, "no." But Pompey did. This guy thought "no," Pompey shouldn't have.

Interviewer: How about "did Pompey leave?"

Paul: No, he didn't.

Interviewer: Does this mean the best thing Pompey could do is to leave the country?

Paul: No, not the best, but it means "why didn't he leave the country instead of accepting Casear's terms?"

Interviewer: So, how about the last question?

Paul: Yes.

Paul A. was clever at adopting my intonation patterns. Most of the others had less skill and, also, less success with this quotation. Unfortunately, this result is confounded with Paul's general ability, which is considerable. But Paul's ability does not alter the fact that *he* was helped by expressively reading the quotation, and there is no reason to assume children of less ability would not be helped by the same approach. If the suggestion is not too silly, I would say that students in the Caesar class will be aided by coaching in dramatic reading.

A Note on Motivation

I mentioned above that the students seemed not to be committed to the materials. That was in connection with answering questions, but the same lack of commitment appears in other situations. At least, this is one way of looking at what happened to the Caesar class during the third week of instruction.

One of the choicest parts of the Caesar Unit is a conflict of evidence between the students' two major sources. The issue concerns the sequence of events after Caesar crossed the Rubicon. According to Caesar's commentaries, first there was a failure of peace negotiation with Pompey, then Caesar occupied several key cities. A reconstruction based on Cicero's letters reverses the sequence. First Caesar occupies the cities, then he negotiates. In order to present the conflict, Richard Emmett, the classroom teacher, divided the class into two groups, one working from

Cicero, the other from Caesar. The groups worked independently, arrived at their different reconstructions, and then compared results.

The conflict in evidence immediately became a conflict of students. This, in spite of the fact that every student had been pro-Caesar, including those who now were Ciceronians. Indeed the Ciceronians remained pro-Caesar. There was no inconsistency in this for them because they were not truly engaged with the materials. The analogy which comes to mind is the rioter who uses the street as a source of rocks and bricks but couldn't care less about its construction. The assertions and counter-assertions revolved around two issues, both of which were irrelevant: the relative competence of the two groups of students, and the relative quality of the commentaries and Cicero's letters as sources. The latter may sound as if it were appropriate to the real issue, but as stated by the students, it was not. Cicero gives many more dates than Caesar. To the Ciceronians, this proved their case. But there is no question of the order of events given in Caesar's commentaries, and the basic conflict was over order rather than dating. This fact was well within the grasp of the children but they were not interested in it. The unimportance of the materials to the children was nicely pointed up in the following exchange between Richard Emmett and a Ciceronian:

Emmett: Which is the most important chapter in Caesar?

Ciceronian: We didn't look them over for information.

Emmett: Why not? You had the chance.

Ciceronian: Yeah, but we didn't.

Emmett: Why?

Ciceronian: Because I thought Cicero had enough information.

This same Ciceronian later suggested that the entire controversy could be solved through compromise!

The incident of the Caesar-Cicero conflict is interesting because it demonstrates that getting children to interact with each other does not guarantee that they interact with the materials. Often, I believe, the assumption is that motivation and involvement with the materials are positively related. In this case, quite the opposite was true: the students' motivation distracted them from the true conflict of evidence. The children made extensive use of the materials in the "debate," but only in a most superficial way to provision themselves with ammunition.

TABLE 1

Unambiguous Quotations

Students' Answers

QUESTIONS	CORRECT ANSWERS	DAVID	DEBBIE	DENNIS	JUAN	PAUL A.	PAUL L.	TOTAL CORRECT NO. CORRECT/ NO. ANSWERS
1 a	yes	yes	yes	yes	–	yes	yes	5/5
b	no	no	no	yes	–	no	no	4/5
3 a	no	no	–	yes	–	yes	yes	1/4
b	Pompey	Caesar	–	Caesar	Caesar	Pompey	Caesar	1/5
c	traitor	traitor						
4 a	Pompey-writer	Caesar-Pompey	Caesar-opponents	Caesar-people	Caesar	–	Caesar	0/5
6 a	no	no	no	no	no	no	–	5/5
8 a	defensive	defensive	defensive	offensive	defensive	defensive	defensive	5/6

TABLE 2

Number of Correct Answers as a Function and Number of Propositions in Mind

NUMBER OF STEPS IN MIND	MEAN PERCENT CORRECT	NUMBER OF QUESTIONS
1	91	4
2	7	3
3	100	1
4	25	1

TABLE 3

Distinguishing Ambiguous and Unambiguous Sentences

STUDENT	AMBIGUOUS SENTENCES			UNAMBIGUOUS SENTENCES					NO. WRONG
	2	5	7	1	3	4	6	8	
David	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	2
Debbie	yes	no	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	2
Dennis	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	3
Juan	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	4
Paul A.	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	3
Paul L.	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	3
No. Wrong	6	2	5	1	1	1	1	0	
Mean Percent		4.3			0.8				

Test

Here are some sentences. Read them and then try to answer the questions underneath. But beware! Sometimes the questions *cannot* be answered. You have to decide whether or not the question can be answered; and then, if you think it can, you have to decide what the answer should be. Don't be tooled. Some of the questions are tricky. There are some which look at first as if they have no answer, but in fact they do have one. And others at first seem to have an answer, but really they do not.

All the sentences, except one, have the question "Can you tell?" under them, as well as other questions about the sentence. If you think these other questions *cannot* be answered, then write "no" after "Can you tell?" One sentence does not have "Can you tell?" under it. This means you *must* answer all the other questions.

1. Our friend Pompey has shown neither wisdom or courage in anything he has done. Even in his third consulship, when he started being a defender of the constitution, he urged the ten tribunes to propose a bill allowing Caesar's candidature in his absence.

– Were Caesar and Pompey *once* allies? .....

– Has Pompey always defended the constitution? .....

– Can you tell? .....

2. Caesar wrote to Cicero: "I beg of you that I may avail myself of your advice, influence, position and support of every kind."

– Does Caesar consider Cicero to be his ally? .....

– Can you tell? .....

3. But Pompey, behaving dishonorably, takes himself to the city of Brindisi and Bellienus, they say, on hearing this, surrendered.

– Was Bellienus at Brindisi? .....

– Was Bellienus on Pompey's or on Caesar's side of the war? .....

– According to the writer, was Pompey a traitor or hero? .....

– Can you tell? .....

4. "Fight along with Pompey," say you, "rather than be a slave." To what end? To be doomed if beaten by Caesar; to be a slave after all if victorious.

– Who will enslave whom if they are victorious? .....

– Can you tell? .....

5. Such an idea never occurred to our friend Pompey in former times, and least of all in this controversy.

– Is the writer accusing or defending Pompey in this sentence? .....

– Can you tell? .....

6. Several Pompeian contingents swelled Caesar's ranks and others increased his cavalry strength.

– Was Pompey able to rely on his troops? .....

– Can you tell? .....

7. Caesar wrote: "All units of the Thirteenth were recalled from their garrison stations, and we moved in the direction of Osimo. The town was occupied under Publius Attius Varus."

– Is Attius Varus on Caesar's or Pompey's side of the civil war? .....

– Can you tell? .....

8. Caesar pointed out that he had left his province to protect himself against his enemies.

– Did Caesar consider his attack on Italy to be defensive or offensive? .....

– Can you tell? .....

9. What terms from Caesar could there be that were preferable to Pompey's abandonment of his country? Why did Pompey do it?

– Did Pompey accept Caesar's terms? .....

– Should Pompey have accepted Caesar's terms? .....

– Did Pompey leave Italy? .....

– Should Pompey have left Italy? .....

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